

City of Stillwater

Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan

PURPOSE

By implementing the provisions of this management plan, the City is attempting to mitigate the disruption to its urban forest caused by the infestation of Emerald ash borer (EAB). Taking an active approach to future infestation of *Fraxinus* spp. enables the City to address both public and private impacts in an efficient and effective manner.

The City will attempt to distribute costs associated with EAB over a manageable time period, and lessen the economic and social impact that an extensive loss of ash trees would have on the quality of life in our community.

INTRODUCTION

Agrilus planipennis, commonly known as an Emerald ash borer (EAB), has a natural range of eastern Russia, northern China, Japan and Korea. It is a bright green, metallic beetle with an elongated, slender body measuring 1/2-inch long. The adult beetles feed on ash foliage but cause little damage neither physiologically nor aesthetically. Trees become infested when adult beetles lay eggs on the bark, which hatch into larvae that bore into the tree. The larvae tunnel in the phloem layer (between bark and wood) and disrupt the movement of water and nutrients, causing eventual death of the tree.

In July 2002, EAB was first discovered in the United States in Michigan. It is suspected that the insect arrived on solid wood packing material shipped from its native Asia. Without any natural predators or controls in North America, the insect has spread to 35 states and five Canadian provinces. Millions of ash trees have been killed with some cities reporting complete loss of all ash trees within 5 years of EAB becoming established. Though millions of dollars have been spent on prevention methods, there has been no stopping the devastation to the urban forest. The most current research shows that early sanitation efforts in Minnesota have helped slow the spread of EAB, but new infestation sites are being reported every growing season.

Emerald ash borer adults can fly at least a half mile from the tree when they emerge. However, new infestations are most often created when people transport infested nursery ash trees, logs or firewood into uninfested areas. Shipments of ash trees and transportation of firewood has been regulated by the state to reduce the spread of EAB. It was first discovered in Minnesota in 2009 and has since spread to the entire southeast portion of the state, the Twin Cities metro area, and isolated areas such as southwest Minnesota and the Duluth metro area. Washington County is a designated as a quarantine area and transportation of ash wood outside of the county is prohibited. The EAB was discovered within the City in the summer of 2018 in Legends area, located in the southwest corner of the City.

RECOGNITION OF EAB

Signs and Symptoms of EAB include:

- Splitting bark and/or small “D” shaped exit holes where beetles emerge
- Serpentine “S” shaped larval feeding galleries underneath the bark

- General thinning and branch dieback of the tree canopy
- Increased woodpecker activity
- Sprouting of epicormic shoots on the trunk of the tree

INVENTORY

The City completed a tree inventory in the summer of 2018. All city streets and certain park open spaces were included. Of the total 3921 trees inventoried, 592 were ash trees, or approximately 15% of the public tree population. More specifically, 397 ash trees were inventoried in the boulevard and 195 ash trees in City parks and open spaces.

TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Although it is impossible to stop the spread of invasive species like EAB, the City of Stillwater's EAB Management Plan is created to lessen the impact of the EAB on the City's landscape. The City's Management Plan will attempt to control and prevent the spread of EAB.

Boulevard Trees

1. The City will continue the policy of excluding any new ash tree plantings in the public Right-of-Way (ROW) and will prohibit citizens and businesses from the continued planting of ash trees. The prohibition applies only to *Fraxinus* spp. (green ash, white ash, black ash, and blue ash) and does not include *Sorbus* spp. (mountain-ash).
2. The City shall begin to inventory any poor quality ash trees or trees in fair condition with major defects.
3. The City will remove any ash trees that are considered to be stressed, poor structured, dead dying or diseased at no cost to the property owner. A tree removal list will be started and trees will be removed on the list in proper order, unless the ash trees(s) is considered hazardous to the public, in which case it would be removed immediately.
4. The City will not remove healthy ash trees, and has no intentions of removing mass amounts of ash trees that are not diseased within neighborhoods heavily populated with ash trees.
5. The city will permit residents to chemically treat an ash tree in the public ROW under the conditions of hiring a licensed tree service that is bonded and insured, and that is a State of Minnesota Licensed Commercial Pesticide Applicator using state approved trunk injection pesticides only. (Note: Chemical treatment would not preclude future removal of said ash tree if deemed necessary.)
6. The City will not replace boulevard trees in residential areas. Any tree replacement desired by the property owner must be permitted by the City and not be permitted where sidewalks or other infrastructure would pose restrictions.

Public Property Trees

1. The City will not plant any new ash trees on public property.
2. The City shall begin to remove any poor quality tree or trees in fair condition with major defects.

3. Ash trees with the maintained areas of the parks showing symptoms of EAB will be treated or removed in accordance with the recognized best practices to slow the spread to the community.
4. Ash trees in wooded areas will be left alone unless tree failure would result in harm or damage to adjacent structures or targets. If infestation is early, the tree(s) will be removed as needed to slow the spread to the community.
5. It is not the intent to remove healthy ash trees to manage the spread of EAB, without special circumstance,
6. In mowed areas, ash trees will be replaced. Replacement trees will be placed to promote species diversity, and will favor native species when possible.

Private Property Trees

1. Ash trees on private property will be the responsibility of the property owner.
2. Property owners are urged to monitor EAB. It would be prudent for residents to establish a relationship with an ISA Certified Arborist in the event that ash tree evaluation or removal is desired.
3. The City will permit residents to use chemical treatments on their ash trees given the following:
 - a. Private contractors are to use **only** the approved trunk injection method.
 - b. The injection treatment application must be done by a licensed tree contractor that is bonded, insured, and state licensed to apply commercial tree chemicals.
4. The City will encourage residents to replace trees lost with appropriate species for their site or to plant new trees in advance of EAB infestation and ash removal.
5. The city will not treat or dispose of any ash trees on private property.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Resident education and outreach communication are key components of managing the impact of the EAB, especially as more information becomes available. Continued coordinated public information dissemination to residents and the media will be administered through the City's website, newsletters, and social media.

WOOD UTILIZATION

The City will publicize the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's regulations for handling ash wood removal. Washington County is currently under a quarantine which prohibits the transportation of wood outside of the County. From October 1 to April 30, EAB-infested trees can be removed and transported only within the quarantine area, so long as they are promptly chipped to the required dimensions of less than 1"x1"x1".

MONITORING AND TRACKING

The City will track the spread of EAB in Stillwater and surrounding communities in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural Resources. The City will also monitor trees that have been treated as reported by private contractors.

Appendix A: Resources

The following is a list of resources for residents to review to learn about Emerald Ash Borer symptoms, firewood requirements, and insecticide options. The City will update this list as more information becomes available.

[EAB Information Homepage – United State Department of Agriculture APHIS](#)

[Signs and Symptoms of EAB \(PDF\)](#)

[Map of EAB in USA \(PDF\)](#)

[Ash Tree Identification](#)

[Minnesota Ash Tree Waste Disposal Sites](#)

[EAB Quarantine Information – Minnesota Department of Agriculture](#)

[Firewood Restrictions Information](#)

[Homeowner Guide to Insecticide Selection, Use, and Environment Protection](#)